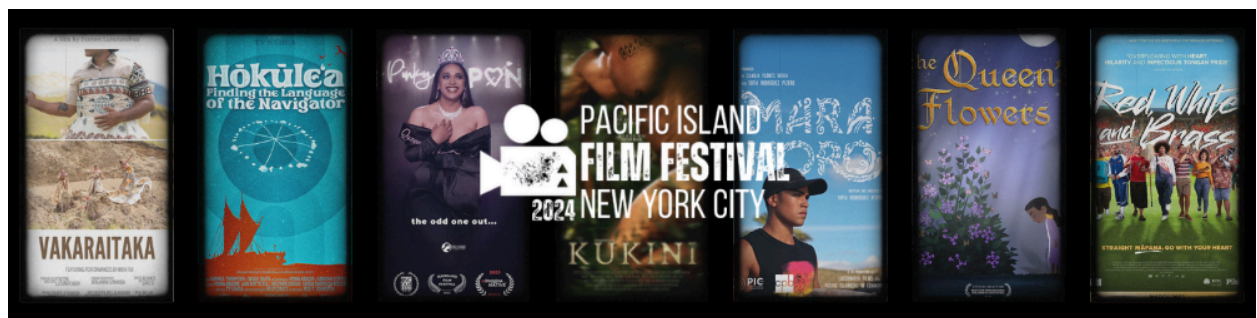


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NEW YORK CITY'S LARGEST PRESENTATION OF PACIFIC ISLAND CINEMA RETURNS FOR ITS SECOND EDITION, OCTOBER 17-20, 2024



FORMERLY KNOWN AS HĀLĀWAI FILM FESTIVAL, THE FESTIVAL REBRANDS TO THE PACIFIC ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL OF NYC TO BE A MORE EXPANSIVE REFLECTION OF PACIFIC ISLAND CINEMA

THE 2024 MAIN SLATE INCLUDES OVER 30 FILMS AND SPECIAL EVENTS PROGRAMS HELD AT NOTABLE NEW YORK CITY VENUES

NEW YORK CITY—August 28, 2024—The Pacific Island Film Festival of NYC (PIFF) (formerly known as the Hālāwai Film Festival) proudly returns for its second edition, presenting over 30 films from October 17-20, 2024 at the Village East by Angelika, New York Public Library (NYPL) for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, The National Museum of the American Indian, and Ascent Lounge in Columbus Circle.

As part of the 2024 season, PIFF will expand its programming to include three new programs. **Dinner and a Movie** is a collaboration prix fixe dinner from Chef Chung Chow at Michelin-recognized noreetuh in the East Village, followed by a film screening. Additionally, the festival will host two free public events—**A Celebration of Dances from the Pacific Islands** at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts and a **Changemakers Talk presented by International Cultural Arts Network (ICAN)** following the workshop, three films centering the rich legacy of Pacific Island storytelling will be screened free for the public.

“This year’s program highlights truly diverse forms of storytelling, creativity and expression from Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia,” remarks PIFF NYC Executive Director Stacey Young. “Through these films, we can collectively reimagine the future and speak of the past, traditions, mythology and history with Pacific Island storytelling. In our second year, we recognize just how important it is to have spaces like these to gather and celebrate as a community. Our ongoing partnerships with organizations like ICAN and Asian CineVision, allow us to continue the important work of building a platform and pipeline for Pacific Island cinema and talent right here in New York City.”

The festival will conclude at the Ascent Lounge with a special concert from one of Hawai‘i’s top female musicians, Paula Fuga, as part of the closing night festivities, which include the filmmaker awards gala and fundraiser.

Attendees currently can purchase Patron (\$500) or Festival Passes (\$275), as well as tickets to special events, including the Closing Night Gala (\$150) and Dinner and a Movie (\$100). Patrons can also purchase a pass for the Changemaker Talk and all Angelika Theater film screenings (\$75). Single film tickets will be available for purchase starting October 1, 2024.

2024 PACIFIC ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL MAIN SLATE

OPENING NIGHT: A CELEBRATION OF DANCES OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Thursday, October 17, 2024

New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center

PIFF NYC returns to the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center for opening night with A Celebration of Dances of the Pacific Islands. Commencing with an opening protocol and a dance performance by Dancers Unlimited, PIFF NYC will screen two films, VAKARAITAKA from Fiji and PO’ELE WAI from the Kingdom of Hawai‘i.

VAKARAITAKA

Fiji | 15 minutes | Fenton Lutunatabua

Set in the visually beautiful Fijian hills, Vakaraitaka is a four-part contemporary dance narrative combining poetry and climate activism.

PO’ELE WAI

USA | 20 minutes | Tiare Ribeaux

A magical realism-infused narrative that hits close to home as a family discovers, to their horror, that their beloved land has been poisoned by the fuel leaks at Red Hill.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: DINNER AND A MOVIE

Friday, October 18, 2024

noreetuh

*The festival kicks into high gear with a two-part presentation: a collaborative prix fixe dinner showcasing modern Hawaiian cuisine at Michelin-recognized **noreetuh** followed by a screening of coming-of-age film INKY PINKY PONKY.*

INKY PINKY PONKY

Aotearoa (New Zealand) | 60 minutes | Damon Fepulea'i, Ramon Te Wake

A young fakaleitī (transgender), Lisa, gets involved with rugby captain Mose while navigating school life and overcoming intolerance and prejudice to find acceptance and happiness.

CHANGEMAKERS TALK PRESENTED BY ICAN

Saturday, October 19

National Museum of the American Indian

Recently celebrated in Forbes as one of six visionaries shaping the Hawaiian filmmaking scene, film producer Angela Laprete, in partnership with ICAN will host a distinguished roster of film and entertainment industry artists from Hawai'i who are on the cutting edge of creative activity. Following the workshop, three films centering the rich legacy of Hawaiian storytelling will be screened for free to the public.

HŌKŪLE'A: FINDING THE LANGUAGE OF THE NAVIGATOR

USA | 40 minutes | Ty Sanga

In 2006, cultural anthropologist Wade Davis sailed with master navigator Nainoa Thompson to learn about the art of wayfinding. Fifteen years later the two explorers contemplate the mysteries of traditional navigation and a future inspired by the language of the navigator.

THE QUEEN'S FLOWERS

Kingdom of Hawai'i | 12 minutes | Ciara Lacy, Daniel Sousa

A magical take on a true story, The Queen's Flowers is an animated short adventure for kids that follows Emma, a Native Hawaiian girl in 1915 Honolulu, as she makes a special gift for the last monarch of Hawai'i, Queen Lili'uokalani.

KŪKINI

Kingdom of Hawai'i | 26 minutes | Paula Fuga

In 1790 Hawai'i, an elite warrior must leave his family behind when sent on a deadly mission to report on the bloody war waged by Kamehameha against Maui. When captured by the enemy, he is miraculously saved by someone who has a message for him of their own.

FILM SCREENINGS AT VILLAGE EAST BY ANGELIKA

Saturday, October 19, 2024

Village East by Angelika

FEATURES

KANIELA: THE DANNY KALEIKINI STORY

USA | 79 minutes | *Pawel Nuckowski, Michael Lum*

Kaniela: The Danny Kaleikini Story is a biographical documentary based on the life of the man known as Hawai'i's Ambassador of Aloha, as told in his own words.

MAURI

USA | 71 minutes | *Zaya Benazzo, Maurizio Benazzo*

The film is an intimate, visually stunning testament to a land and a people who have survived removal, exploitation and colonization—and the healing ways that are part of Māori ancestral knowledge.

RED, WHITE, AND BRASS

New Zealand | 85 minutes | *Damon Fepulea'i*

When Maka and Veni fail to get tickets for the most important game of their lives, they decide to form a traditional Tongan marching band just so they can go to the game.

SHORTS

THE ALI'I KINGS

USA | 27 minutes | *Christine Kunewa Walker*

Set in the 1960s, a road trip from Utah to Tikiland, California, unveils painful revelations for a Hawaiian-German Mormon family.

APPA

USA | 13 minutes | *Keli'i Grace*

A short film set on the North Shore of O'ahu based on the true story of a Korean-American farming family tormented by loss and addiction.

DEAR ALOHA

USA | 15 minutes | *Cris Romento*

Displaced Native Hawaiians reveal how aloha sustains them amidst distance, loss, and longing. Meanwhile, back in Hawai'i, locals grapple with the history of colonization that has Hawaiians disappearing from their homeland.

DUSK

USA | 9 minutes | *Pono Wong*

This cutting-edge experimental multi-media short film tells the tragic story of an orphan teen struggling to care for his younger brother.

FAIR

USA | 10 minutes | Taylor Gruver

Based on the true story of one woman's fateful day as a hired party princess at the mansion of her high school nemesis.

IN EXILE

Marshall Islands | 11 minutes | Nathan Fitch

This film explores the US nuclear legacy in the Pacific through the lens of members of the Marshallese community in Arkansas.

KAI HALI'A (SEA OF MEMORY)

USA | 9 minutes | Angelique Kalani Axelrode

In a realm of abstracted and embodied memory, a diasporic Kanaka traces a genealogy of identity through kūpuna (ancestors), 'āina (land), and ke kai (ocean).

LAST LIGHT

USA | 16 minutes | Koa Bayani

A film crew in Hawai'i fights to get the final shot of a months-long production. Thankfully, there are ten minutes of light left, and the director hasn't finished writing the scene.

LEA TUPU'ANGA / MOTHER TONGUE

Aotearoa | 17 minutes | Vea Mafile'o

A young speech therapist disconnected from her Tongan heritage lies about her Tongan language skills to get a job. Out of her depth, she must find a way to communicate or risk her patient's life.

MARAHORO

Chile | 17 minutes | Sofía Rodríguez Pizero

A 15-year-old Rapa Nui young boy who has a rough time balancing his father's wishes for him to become a Rapa Nui folk artist and his own calling from the voices of the sea.

NGAU KAHUA

Chile | 3 minutes | Loreto Vaikapua Gómez Campos, Catalina Baltazar, Macarena Mathias

After feeling homesick for Rapa Nui, Tai immerses himself in virtual reality to relive his childhood on the Island. After remembering that nothing is actually real, he decides to leave the simulation and focus on the present.

THE GATHERING OF NATIONS

USA | 20 minutes | Branscombe Richmond

The 2024 Festival of the Pacific Arts (FestPac) is held in Hawai'i as a symposium for the islands to gather and share in culture, economy, and community. This is a collection of interviews that reflects on the cultural impacts and futures of Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia.

OLA

USA | 4 minutes | Marcus Goh

A Hawaiian teen navigates life and reflects on what his kūpuna has done for him.

ONLY IN AOTEAROA - WĀHINE EDITION

Aotearoa | 22 minutes | Scotty Cotter, Maruia Jensen

Short, sharp, comedy skits told from a distinctly Māori perspective, with real-time conversations between characters that mirror an issue or common experience that affects Māori in a funny, feel-good fashion.

SEARCH FOR HAWAIIKI

Aotearoa | 19 minutes | Fredrick Jozef Hoani Teteira Pokai

After years in a psych ward, Fable is released into the care of his estranged whānau only to rediscover his need to find inner peace.

SINA MA TINIRAU

Fiji | 9 minutes | Vilsoni Tausie Hereniko

When a prince is cursed to become an eel and has to win the love of a beautiful woman to become human again, he gifts her with his body in the form of a coconut palm tree in a seductive display.

SNACK

USA | 9 minutes | Lauren To'omalatai

On a night out with friends, Jess briefly opens up about her grandfather's death. At home, in the kitchen looking for something to eat, she startles her grandmother, and the two share a sweet moment through food and song, remembering the man they've both lost.

SON OF SAMOA

SAMOA | 10 minutes | Laman Time

Son of Samoa takes you through the journey of Tatau, where Laman discusses his disconnection from family and community and his wavering relationship with himself.

TRADEWINDS

USA | 23 minutes | Mighty Island

An intimate portrait and examination of the life of CHamoru jazz pianist Patrick Palomo, whose musical style has combined Chamoru lyrics with the sounds and melodies of contemporary and classic jazz music.

TWO BREATHS

USA | 17 minutes | Kateryna Kurganska

After a man-made disaster decimates an evergreen island, a stranded 11-year-old girl must find the tenacity to leave behind her home with the help of an unlikely friend.

WHO'S THAT GIRL?

USA | 8 minutes | Josh Tatofi

In a vibrant 1950s high school set in Hawaii, the Sadie Hawkins dance is fast approaching, and as the leader of the jocks, known as "The Mynah Birds," and the leader of the greasers vie for the attention of the charismatic leader of the popular girls, "The Puas."

CLOSING NIGHT: PIFF NYC FILMMAKER AWARDS GALA

Sunday, October 20

Ascent Lounge Columbus Circle

Taking place at The Ascent Lounge Columbus Circle, PIFF NYC's closing night presentation will include a filmmaker awards gala, fundraiser and rare New York City performance from Hawaii's iconic singer-songwriter Paula Fuga. As a Na Hoku Hanohano Award winner, Paula has collaborated with Jack Johnson, Ziggy Marley, and Ben Harper. Sponsored by Anheuser-Busch.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

- **Organization:** Pacific Island Film Festival of NYC (PIFF)
- **Dates:** October 17-20, 2024
- **Locations:** Village East by Angelika, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center, National Museum of the American Indian, Noreetuh, The Ascent Lounge in Columbus Circle
- **Tickets:** Individual Film Tickets available starting October 1, 2024, at piffnyc.org
- **Interviews available:** For interviews with filmmakers, actors, or festival staff and a list of available screeners, please fill out a [media accreditation form](#) and contact info@piffnyc.org.
- **Link to use in your story:** piffnyc.org
- **Instagram handle to tag:** [@pifilmfestnyc](#)

TICKETING

Festival passes and tickets for special events are available now (*quantities limited*). Single tickets go on sale on October 1, 2024. Information on the complete schedule, trailers, and tickets is available at piffnyc.org.

SPONSORS

The 2024 Pacific Island Film Festival is supported in part by funding or in-kind support from CACF Grant, Matson, Anheuser Busch, The Asian American Foundation (TAAF), NYU A|P|A, Film Fiji, and Hālāwai NYC.

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ABOUT PACIFIC ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL OF NYC (PIFF)

The Pacific Island Film Festival of NYC (PIFF) is dedicated to telling a richer, more comprehensive story of the Pacific Islands. PIFF endeavors to be a platform for Indigenous Pacific Island voices to be heard and recognized, celebrating, cultivating and sharing the stories, art, talent and cultural resources of the Pacific Islands with the broader New York community. PIFF is a fiscally sponsored project of Asian CineVision (ACV).

ABOUT ASIAN CINEVISION (ACV)

Asian CineVision is a 501(c)(3) media arts nonprofit devoted to the development, exhibition, promotion, and preservation of Asian and Asian American experiences through storytelling. Our mission is to nurture and grow the community of makers and enthusiasts of Asian and Asian American independent film, television, and digital.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL ARTS NETWORK (ICAN)

International Cultural Arts Network (ICAN) is a non-profit 501(c)(3), established on April 13, 2023 in the State of Hawaii. Film industry veterans - Angela Laprete, Brian Keaulana and Robert Suka – co-founded ICAN to serve a mission: elevating, educating and empowering diversity with a focus on Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders (NHPI) in Hawaii's TV and Film Industry and bridging cultural connections globally in various forms of storytelling and entertainment.